

Personnel Preparation Priority

Develop, implement, and evaluate a system for ensuring recruitment, employment, and retention of highly qualified staff.

Utah has experienced persistent shortages of special education teachers and related services personnel. Many Utah Local Education Agencies (including charters) continue to employ significant numbers of special education teachers on letters of authorization in hard-to-staff classrooms and schools. Pressure caused by these shortages is compounded by the No Child Left Behind Act and IDEA 2004 requiring all states to have a fully licensed teacher in every classroom.

The purpose of this priority is to support projects that will improve and/or develop programs that provide personnel preparation for special education teachers and related servers to enhance the supply of highly qualified and highly skilled personnel serving Utah's students with disabilities. Projects funded under this priority will offer programs through alternative routes to licensure, distance outreach, or other non-traditional methods of personnel preparation.

To be considered for funding, all applicants must include the following:

- a) How their project will contribute to increasing the number of highly qualified educators for students with disabilities in Utah.
- b) How their project will collaborate with Utah LEAs and the USOE and, as a result of that collaboration, build capacity.
- c) How their project aligns with Utah State Office of Education State Performance Plan (SPP).
- d) How their project will use effective, research-based training practices and methods.
- e) How their project will train prospective educators to use scientifically validated interventions and instructional procedures for students with disabilities.
- f) How their project will improve outcomes for students with disabilities.
- g) How their project will use other funding sources and in-kind resources to leverage state funds.
- h) How project results can be disseminated statewide.

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